

and that the whole of the money was restored. Each now began to form conjectures upon this circumstance; but the most prevailing opinion was, that the Egyptians had contrived this, that they might find occasion against them, to distress them. These thoughts increased their torments, and made their journey homewards completely wretched.

With hearts oppress'd with guilt and woe,  
To Canaan's distant land they go;  
Their brother left, confin'd in chains;  
Themselves sustain severer pains;  
And, in the tidings which they bear,  
Increase an aged parent's care.  
The life, their food design'd to save,  
Their news draws nearer to the grave.

And now, we may suppose, they have reached their father's house. But O, when good old Jacob had heard the doleful tidings of their rough

usage, by the Lord of the land; of their imprisonment; and that Simeon was left behind, and in prison too! he cried out, "Ye have robbed me of my children—Joseph is dead, and Simeon is bound in chains; surely my grey hairs will go down with sorrow to the grave." We have reason to think, from this expression, that Jacob suspected his sons had been guilty of some crime in Egypt, which caused them to be thus used; or, that they had taken away their money, which they said they had found in their sacks, by force or fraud. Indeed, he had great reasons for such suspicions, by their being so wicked in times past. This may teach children, that if they wish to avoid the hard thoughts, which their parents, or other persons might have of them, they must act so well in small, as well as great concerns, as to deserve their confidence. Persons are but seldom charged with crimes, who have never given a proof of their folly, and want of circumspection: